

# FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : U. S. Mission Berlin.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF : Department G302 of November 10, 1958

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SUBJECT: Comments on Certain Intellectuals in the East German Refugee Flow AIR-3

Unfortunately, this Mission did not receive a copy of the Department's G-302 at the time initial dissemination was made from Washington. The Department's request for information was brought to the attention of this Mission informally by Embassy Bonn officers. Arrangements were made to secure a copy of G-302 from the Embassy in Bonn; a copy reached Berlin late in December--thus too late to make possible a report by the end of November as requested by the Department. The following comments are forwarded with specific reference to the enumerated questions contained in G-302.

1. In general, there is no clear-cut motivation pattern applicable to all or even most of the intellectuals leaving the Soviet Zone. Individuals interviewed by Mission officers usually state that they were unhappy for a considerable length of time, and for a number of reasons, before leaving. In each case, however, some particular new development or change in circumstances provides the immediate justification for departure. For example, although SED pressure on educational institutions has been heavy for a long period, many teachers or doctors state that the decision to leave was made after some such development as: (a) receipt of a summons to appear before a government functionary or a Party-dominated committee to explain why a previous action had been taken or why the individual had expressed anti-regime sentiments; (b) dismissal of a child from a particular school or receipt of a notification that a child is inadmissible in a high school, technical school or university because of his parents' bourgeois background; (c) a reorganization of the traditional curriculum in an educational institution along Party approved lines; (d) the advent of nervous or physical exhaustion, due to overwork or psychological harassment; (e) the promotion of Party supporters, having limited professional qualifications, over a highly qualified non-Party man; (f) completion of such professional work as is possible in East German conditions, making it necessary to move to West Germany to find an institution with acceptably high standards and/or necessary materials (e.g. for research). This list is intended to be suggestive, but not exhaustive.

Nearly all physicians who flee East Germany continue their professional work until the time of departure. This is less true of teachers, particularly at the public school level. In general, the lesser the degree of professional training, the greater the likelihood that Party pressure will result in dismissal or transfer to an undesirable job.

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REPORTER

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Figure 1

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2. U.S. Mission Berlin has little or no information concerning the fate of intellectuals who flee to West Germany; only a few, of course, stay in West Berlin. East German propaganda stories alleged that many intellectuals have serious trouble in finding employment in the Federal Republic; a special series of such stories, for example, was developed in connection with the defection of the Rector of Jena University. However, with the exception of physicians, there is no continuing East German drive for recruiting intellectuals who have fled East since (a) the principal GDR need is for production workers, and (b) SED leaders are happy to lose "bourgeois", non-scientific intellectuals. The most outstanding intellectual who returned to East Germany (autumn 1957) after fleeing was Kurt VONNEG. He was last reported by West press sources to have been arrested soon after his return; the East press has not mentioned his present whereabouts.

Most physicians (and other public health specialists) and teachers, including university professors, state that the standards of their respective professional training institutions are dropping steadily. They likewise state that the group remaining in East Germany is overworked. In contrast, there have been very few defections among top level technological specialists; likewise, there have been few if any reports claiming that technological research or advanced training has deteriorated. The shortage of physicians and teachers is admitted by current East German publications; however, there are no comparable references to technologists, although East Germany obviously doesn't have as many as it desires.

Information and comments concerning the quantity and composition of the refugee flow, and reasons therefor, have, of course, been the subject of many Mission reports. This brief report, therefore, is merely supplementary to a number of other reports including the following:

Despatches:

- No. 430 - East Germany's Refugee Flow as Related to the GDR Population, Working Force and Governmental Policy; January 30, 1958.
- No. 630 - Statistical Analysis of the East Berlin Working Force; March 26, 1958.
- No. 97 - East German Labor and the SED Fifth Party Congress; August 4, 1958.
- No. 123 - Soviet Policy Towards Germany and Sundry Topics; August 13, 1958.

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- No. 139 - Comments by a Noted Halle University Professor on University Conditions and State-Church Relations; August 20, 1958.
- No. 141 - Interview with Former Employee of East German FDGB Headquarters; August 20, 1958.
- No. 155 - Defection of the Jena University Rector on the Eve of the GDR Celebration of Its 400 Year Anniversary; August 25, 1958.
- No. 249 - Views of a West Berlin Labor Leader on Developments in East Germany; October 1, 1958.
- No. 291 - Soviet Zone Efforts to Stem the Flight of Physicians; October 20, 1958
- No. 366 - Attitudes Among the Intelligentsia in the Soviet Zone of Germany; November 18, 1958.
- No. 407 - Status of the East German Medical Profession: Information from an American Doctor; December 9, 1958.

Airgrams:

G-85, September 15, 1958  
G-90, September 18, 1958  
G-142, October 21, 1958

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